



## Motor Vehicle Division

46-8504 R11/15 azdot.gov

# CAR BUYING CHECKLIST

*This checklist is created as a guide in the car buying and titling process. There may be other situations that this checklist does not address. The vehicle purchaser is responsible for the transaction and research on the vehicle that is being purchased.*

<b>Verify the seller's information:</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A buyer should ask the seller to provide photo identification and vehicle documentation.</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A legitimate seller will not have a problem providing proof of their identity.</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Check the seller's signature on the back of the title. Signatures must be notarized before the title can be transferred. If there are multiple owners, they will be indicated by a "legal status". The legal status terms "AND" and "AND/OR" require the signatures of all owners. The legal status "OR" by itself requires only one of the owners to sign.</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If someone other than the owner signs the title as seller, he or she must have authorization such as a notarized power of attorney or court order. The seller must give you a certified copy or the original document authorizing them to sign the title (and lien release, if applicable).</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Verify that the person selling the car is the same as the owner listed on the title. If the seller's notarized signature is already on the title and you are purchasing the vehicle from someone other than the seller, you may be purchasing a vehicle from an illegal dealer or "curb-stoner." If something goes wrong with the transfer of title, you may not be able to find that middle man or "curb-stoner" that you paid for the vehicle, to straighten out any problems.</li></ul>
<b>Verify the vehicle information:</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Visually check the vehicle identification number (VIN) on the dashboard and on the sticker in the driver's door jamb to make sure they match. Record the VIN in order for it to be checked later.</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Examine the vehicle title. Look for any alterations on both sides of the document.</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Verify that the vehicle description on the title matches the actual vehicle. (Match the VIN, make, model, etc...)</li></ul>
<b>Inspect the Vehicle:</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Visually inspect the vehicle and have a reputable auto mechanic or repair facility conduct a complete inspection of the mechanical and electrical systems. A complete inspection should be done if there is a "dismantle", "salvage" or "restored salvage" brand on the title or the words "reconstructed", "specially constructed" or "homemade" appears anywhere on the title. There may be a fee for this inspection.</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The vehicle inspection should uncover worn parts, water damage, poorly repaired collision damage and possibly other safety problems which should help in deciding whether to buy or not.</li></ul>
<b>Verify the Odometer:</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Check the odometer reading on the vehicle and look at the back side of the title to see what odometer information has been entered.</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A typical vehicle is driven about 15,000 miles per year. If the odometer mileage of a vehicle shows much less than that average annual usage, the odometer may have been rolled back. An odometer inspection conducted by a reputable auto mechanic or repair facility may be needed.</li></ul>

<b>Buying online or from an out-of-state seller:</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vehicles that have sustained flood damage may be required by federal or state law to have that notation on the vehicle title. This requirement varies by state. Not all vehicles coming from an area that experienced flooding are labeled as water damaged.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Buying a used vehicle online from a private seller can have risks. It is strongly suggested that buyers inspect the vehicle in person before making a purchase.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ADOT does not have any authority to intervene in vehicle sales that were conducted out of state. If a buyer suspects any wrongdoing with the transaction, any action would have to be conducted in the state where the sale occurred.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vehicles that were not manufactured for the U.S. market (grey market) do not conform to federal DOT and EPA standards unless proper conversions have been made. The cost of conversion may be several thousand dollars and must be done at a federally licensed, independent commercial conversion shop (Registered Importer). In most cases, the vehicle cannot be titled and registered in Arizona unless the vehicle has been converted.</li> </ul>
<b>Lien Check:</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check for financial lienholder information on the front of the title. The seller must have a notarized paid receipt (lien release) from the lienholder describing the vehicle, the name of the seller, and the date and amount of the lien. The seller must give you the original paid receipt along with the title. Be sure to verify that all the information on the paid receipt matches the information on the title.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are other types of liens that will prevent the title from being transferred, and they may not appear on the title. Check for outstanding liens using the Lien Motor Vehicle Inquiry and the VIN on <a href="http://www.ServiceArizona.com">www.ServiceArizona.com</a>. There is a fee for this service. No personal information will be accessible or revealed through this customer service feature.</li> </ul>
<b>MVD Title Check and Online VIN Check Services:</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Request the seller provide a current motor vehicle record from MVD to show other issues with the motor vehicle record.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective April 29, 2013, the printed version of an Arizona vehicle title carries a warning of "Nontransferable" at the top and bottom of the title if the motor vehicle record contains any type of current lien or other status that will prevent the title from being transferred to a new owner.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The vehicle and VIN can also be researched through one of the online services such as Vehiclehistory.gov, Carfax.com, AutoCheck.com, VINcheck.com or Instavin.com. The record received will show the vehicle's history of crash repairs, maintenance records, entries from insurance companies and any notations if the vehicle was previously titled and registered in another state. There is usually a fee involved for the online service. No personal registered owner information will be listed on the report.</li> </ul>
<b>After purchase, title the vehicle in your name:</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The buyer and seller should go to an <a href="#">MVD or authorized third-party office</a> together to transfer the title. As the new owner of the vehicle, you must apply for a new title within 15 days from the date of purchase to avoid penalty charges.</li> </ul>